



**Minute of Ferry Users Group Meeting
Skye and Lochaber**

**Held at The Moorings Hotel, Banavie
10:00 28 July 2010**

IN ATTENDANCE

HITRANS

Mr Randal Robertson
Mr Dave Duthie
Mrs Katy Cunningham

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Cllr Allan Henderson

SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT (FERRIES DIVISION)

Ms Cheryl Murrie

CALEDONIAN FERRIES LTD (CFL)

Mr David Cannon
Mr David Taylor

CALEDONIAN MARITIME ASSETS LTD (CMAL)

Ms Lorna Spencer

HIE

Mr Scott Dingwall

CONFEDERATION OF TRANSPORT (CPT)

Mr Mike Dean

SAPT

Mr John MacCormick

APOLOGIES:

Cllr John Laing
Cllr Michael Foxley
Cllr Duncan MacIntyre
Mr Sam MacNaughton
Mr Phil Preston
Mr Phil Flanders
Mr Des Bradley

Mr Scott Dingwall

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Dave Duthie welcomed everyone to the meeting, explaining that he would Chair the meeting in the absence of Cllr John Laing, the regular chair of this meeting

ITEM 1: Minute of Meeting 20 August 2010

The minute was approved as a correct reflection of the meeting.

ITEM 2: Matters Arising

No items raised under matters arising

ITEM 3: Scottish Government Ferries Review

Dave Duthie introduced Cheryl Murrie, Scottish Government to the group. Cheryl advised she has returned recently to ferries division, and any questions she is unable to answer she will take back to the other members of the SFR team and report back to the group as necessary. Cheryl went on to provide background to the SFR through a presentation on this round of consultation of the Review.

Cheryl highlighted that the questionnaire is available for downloading from the Scottish Government website, emphasising the importance of questionnaires being completed and returned.

Dave asked why the tender period and contract length is not under discussion during review.

Cheryl responded that there is scope there to provide comments, if questions are missing. In the case of contract length this is something that the Scottish Government has stated in the Consultation Document that they are keen to see extended. There will be further consultation and the opportunity to feed into the draft plan

Cheryl added there are real challenges to be faced including, reduced budgets, aging vessels, escalating costs. It is important to see review in this context and the need to see it through to its completion.

Dave informed the group that HITRANS are holding a Ferries Workshop in September, to feed into the ferries review.

There followed a general discussion on the review

ITEM 4: Ferry Service Development Through Oban Hub Study

Ranald presented a report to the Group that detailed the findings of Reference Economic Consultants on development options for services currently provided through Oban. The study is complete and has been submitted to the Scottish Government Ferries Division, to feed into review and to take into consideration with their own findings.

The Study is available on the HITRANS website www.hitrans.org.uk

ITEM 5: Ferry Service Development Through Uig Hub Study

Dave Duthie provided background to the study.

The Conclusion of the work is that further work is required to determine the need for a second or larger vessel for Uig and for the service options to the Western Isles to be considered in their whole. The work has ruled out the value in any further work on developing alternative port facilities in Skye and that Uig is the most cost effective option for serving Lochmaddy and Tarbert in the north of Skye.

Option C of the work concluded that there is an urgent need to improve facilities at Uig. The cost of providing a new waiting room is priced at £1.5 m, Highland Council recommended in their previous plans for this. Lorna Spencer suggested this may be difficult to deliver as there is no land for waiting room and that Highland Council had indicated that land currently occupied for fishing boat use is not available.

Action: Dave agreed to discuss options for developing a new passenger terminal at Uig with Highland Council, TECS department.

ITEM 6: Raasay Ferry Terminal Update

David Taylor reported that the terminal is due to be open on 17th August. Berthing trials were held last week.

ITEM 7: Caledonian MacBrayne Operational Update

David Taylor, Regional Manager provided the operational service update for the Lochaber, Small Isles and Skye area for January to the end of May 2010. David reported that there is not a huge differential from last year, with reliability increase on last year due to weather conditions. Performance reports and statistics were issued prior to meeting.

David added, the linkspan at Mallaig will be closed during November for maintenance and that communities have been advised and as soon as this is firmed up details will be placed on the CalMac website

Discussions with communities are underway to enhance winter timetable especially on Skye.

ITEM 8: Public Transport Operational Update

Mike Dean provided the group with the operational update, adding additional connections outwith Uig will continue this winter and will also include Sconser.

Mike noted that concrete bus shelters on A82 are due to be replaced

Mike raised the issue of changes with the Kyle connection to Inverness resulting in train departing before coach has arrived. (11:40)

Action: Ranald agreed to raise the issue of the lost connection at Kyle with ScotRail.

ITEM 9:

AOCB

David Cannon advised the group the Clansman will be back in operation this weekend.

ITEM 10:

Date of Next Meeting

No date set for next meeting